

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Originally Presented) A bill acceptor comprising:
 - a validator assembly capable of identifying acceptable notes and discriminating between currency and non-currency notes;
 - a dual section cash box configured to receive and hold notes received by said bill acceptor, said dual section cash box having a first hopper for receiving currency and a second hopper for receiving non-currency notes; and
 - a transport assembly connected to and controlled by said validator assembly for transporting currency from said validator assembly to said first hopper of said cash box and non-currency notes from said validator assembly to said second hopper.
2. (Originally Presented) The bill acceptor of Claim 1, wherein the validator accepts non-currency notes including bills, vouchers, script, and tickets and provides a control signal to said transport assembly to activate a deflector to direct said non-currency notes to said second hopper.
3. (Originally Presented) The bill acceptor of Claim 1, wherein the validator assembly further comprises:
 - a note discriminator to sense parameters of received notes and determine the authenticity of said received notes.
4. (Originally Presented) The bill acceptor of Claim 1, further comprising:
 - a note discriminator having an opening for receiving notes and a validator head including means for sensing data relating to the authenticity, denomination, and type of note inserted into said discriminator and for generating signals corresponding to the sensed data for each received note.

5. (Originally Presented) The bill acceptor of Claim 1, wherein said transport assembly further comprises:

a deflector for directing notes determined to be authentic non-currency notes to said second hopper of said cash box in response to a signal received from said validator assembly.

6. (Originally Presented) The bill acceptor of Claim 1, wherein said dual section cash box further comprises:

at least one placer and a stacker within said first hopper.

7. (Originally Presented) The bill acceptor of Claim 1, wherein said dual section cash box further comprises:

at least one placer and a stacker within said second hopper.

8. (Originally Presented) The bill acceptor of Claim 1, wherein said dual section cash box further comprises:

at least two separate sections configured to store notes in stacked orientations;
and

a placer assembly within each of said at least two separate sections for receiving individual notes and subsequently placing said received notes on a stack of received notes.

9. (Previously Cancelled).

10. (Originally Presented) A bill acceptor comprising:

a validator assembly capable of identifying acceptable notes and discriminating between currency and non-currency notes, said validator assembly including a note discriminator to sense parameters of received notes and determine authenticity of received notes;

a dual section cash box configured to receive and hold notes received by said bill acceptor, said dual section cash box having a first hopper for receiving currency and a second hopper for receiving non-currency notes;

a transport assembly connected to and controlled by said validator assembly for transporting currency from said validator assembly to said first hopper of said cash box and non-currency notes from said validator assembly to said second hopper; and

a deflector integrated into said transport assembly and connected to said validator assembly, said deflector directing notes determined to be authentic non-currency notes to said second hopper of said cash box in response to a signal received from said validator assembly.

11. (Previously Amended) A method of separating and stacking currency and non-currency notes received by a bill acceptor, comprising:

providing a validator assembly capable of identifying acceptable notes and discriminating between currency and non-currency notes using a validator assembly; and

directing acceptable notes to a transport assembly connected to and controlled by said validator assembly for transporting notes from said validator assembly to a dual section cash box configured to receive and hold notes received by said bill acceptor, said dual section cash box having a first hopper for receiving currency directed to said first hopper by said transport assembly and a second hopper for receiving non-currency notes directed to said second hopper by said transport assembly.

12 and 13 (Cancelled).

14. (Amended) [The bill acceptor of claim 13,] A bill acceptor comprising:
discriminating means for discriminating between currency and non-currency
notes;

a dual-section cash box including a first hopper and a second hopper;

transporting means operatively associated with the discriminating means for
transporting currency notes as discriminated by the discriminating means to the first hopper and
for transporting non-currency notes as discriminated by the discriminating means to the second
hopper;

wherein the transporting means includes a note transport first path to the first
hopper and a note transport second path to the second hopper; and

wherein the transporting means includes a deflector for controlling whether the transporting means transports a note from the discriminating means along the first path or the second path.

15. (Previously Added) The bill acceptor of claim 14, wherein the discriminating means generates a signal for determining the position of the deflector.

16. (Previously Added) The bill acceptor of claim 14, wherein the deflector is controlled by the discriminating means.

17. (Amended) [The bill acceptor of claim 12,] A bill acceptor comprising:
discriminating means for discriminating between currency and non-currency
notes;

a dual-section cash box including a first hopper and a second hopper;
transporting means operatively associated with the discriminating means for
transporting currency notes as discriminated by the discriminating means to the first hopper and
for transporting non-currency notes as discriminated by the discriminating means to the second
hopper; and

wherein the discriminating means is adapted to send an operative signal to a processor of a gaming machine.

18. (Amended) [The bill acceptor of claim 12, further comprising] A bill acceptor
comprising:

discriminating means for discriminating between currency and non-currency
notes;

a dual-section cash box including a first hopper and a second hopper;
transporting means operatively associated with the discriminating means for
transporting currency notes as discriminated by the discriminating means to the first hopper and
for transporting non-currency notes as discriminated by the discriminating means to the second
hopper; and

at least one placer and a stacker within the second hopper.

19. (Previously Added) The bill acceptor of claim 18, further comprising at least one placer and a stacker within the first hopper.

20. (Amended) The bill acceptor of claim [12], 17, wherein the discriminating means determines whether received notes are acceptable notes.

21. (Amended) The bill acceptor of claim [12,] 17, wherein the non-currency notes include tickets.

22. (Amended) The bill acceptor of claim [12,] 17, wherein the non-currency notes include bills, vouchers, script and tickets.

23. (Amended) The bill acceptor of claim [12,] 17, wherein the discriminating means includes a note discriminator to sense parameters of received notes and thereby determine authenticity thereof.

24. (Amended) [The bill acceptor of claim 12,] A bill acceptor comprising:
discriminating means for discriminating between currency and non-currency
notes;

a removable cash box having at least a first hopper and a second hopper;
transporting means operatively associated with the discriminating means for
transporting currency notes as discriminated by the discriminating means to the first hopper and
for transporting non-currency notes as discriminated by the discriminating means to the second
hopper; and

wherein the discriminating means sends a signal to a note deflector of the transporting means to determine whether the transporting means transports a note to the first or second hopper.

25. (Amended) [The bill acceptor of claim 12,] A bill acceptor comprising:
discriminating means for discriminating between currency and non-currency
notes;

a removable cash box having at least a first hopper and a second hopper; and

transporting means operatively associated with the discriminating means for transporting currency notes as discriminated by the discriminating means to the first hopper and for transporting non-currency notes as discriminated by the discriminating means to the second hopper; and

wherein the transporting means transports non-currency notes to a placer area defined between first and second plates and subsequently from the placer area to a stacker area.

26. (Previously Added) The bill acceptor of claim 25, wherein when a non-currency note is in the placer area the first plate is pushed through an opening in the second plate to transport the non-currency note in the placer area into the stacker area.

27. (Previously Added) The bill acceptor of claim 26, wherein the second plate as the number of non-currency notes stacked in the stacker area increases, pushes the stacker notes against a spring-loaded third plate to create additional note storage space.

28. (Amended—To Place in Independent Format) [The bill acceptor of claim 12,] A bill acceptor comprising:

discriminating means for discriminating between currency and non-currency notes;

a first hopper;

a second hopper; and

transporting means operatively associated with the discriminating means for transporting currency notes as discriminated by the discriminating means to the first hopper and for transporting non-currency notes as discriminated by the discriminating means to the second hopper;

wherein the first and second hoppers form at least in substantial part a dual-section cash box, and within each of the hoppers is a placer assembly which receives individual notes and subsequently places the received notes on a stack of received notes.

29. (Previously Added) The bill acceptor of claim 28, wherein the discriminating means sends a signal to a processor of a gaming machine.

30. (Cancelled).

31. (Amended—To Place in Independent Format) [The bill acceptor of claim 30,] A bill acceptor comprising:

a validator assembly adapted to identify acceptable notes and discriminate between currency and non-currency notes;

a first hopper adapted to receive and hold acceptable currency notes from the validator assembly;

a second hopper adapted to receive and hold acceptable non-currency notes from the validator assembly; and

a transport assembly connected to and controlled by the validator assembly and adapted to transport acceptable currency notes from the validator assembly to the first hopper and acceptable non-currency notes from the validator assembly to the second hopper;

wherein the first and second hoppers form at least in substantial part a dual-section cash box.

32. (Amended—To Place in Independent Format) [The bill acceptor of claim 30,] A bill acceptor comprising:

a validator assembly adapted to identify acceptable notes and discriminate between currency and non-currency notes;

a first hopper adapted to receive and hold acceptable currency notes from the validator assembly;

a second hopper adapted to receive and hold acceptable non-currency notes from the validator assembly; and

a transport assembly connected to and controlled by the validator assembly and adapted to transport acceptable currency notes from the validator assembly to the first hopper and acceptable non-currency notes from the validator assembly to the second hopper;

wherein the validator assembly is adapted to send a signal relative to the acceptable notes identified to a processor of a gaming machine.

33. (Amended) [The bill acceptor of claim 30,] A bill acceptor comprising:

a validator assembly adapted to identify acceptable notes and discriminate between currency and non-currency notes;

a cash box having at least a first hopper adapted to receive and hold acceptable currency notes from the validator assembly and a second hopper adapted to receive and hold acceptable non-currency notes from the validator assembly; and

a transport assembly connected to and controlled by the validator assembly and adapted to transport acceptable currency notes from the validator assembly to the first hopper and acceptable non-currency notes from the validator assembly to the second hopper;

wherein within each of the hoppers is a placer assembly which receives individual notes and subsequently places the received notes on a stack of previously received notes.

41. (Newly Added) A bill acceptor comprising:

a validator assembly adapted to identify acceptable notes and discriminate between currency notes and non-currency, casino-gaming ticket notes;

a removable dual-section cash box adapted to receive and hold the notes received by the bill acceptor, the dual-section cash box having a first hopper for receiving currency notes and a second hopper for receiving non-currency, casino-gaming ticket notes;

a transport assembly connected to and controlled by the validator assembly for transporting currency notes from the validator assembly to the first hopper and non-currency, casino-gaming ticket notes from the validator assembly to the second hopper; and

the validator assembly being further adapted to send a signal to both interface with a processor of a casino gaming machine signifying receipt and denomination of the currency notes and non-currency, casino-gaming ticket notes for accumulation of a like value amount of gaming credits in the gaming machine and with the transport assembly to guide the notes to the first or second hoppers depending on whether they are determined by the validator assembly to be acceptable currency notes or acceptable non-currency casino-gaming ticket notes.

42. (Newly Added—See Generally Old Claim 25) The bill acceptor of claim 41, wherein the transporting assembly transports non-currency, casino-gaming ticket notes to a

placer area defined between first and second plates and subsequently from the placer area to a stacker area.

43. (Newly Added—See Generally Old Claim 26) The bill acceptor of claim 42, wherein when a non-currency, casino-gaming ticket note is in the placer area, the first plate is pushed through an opening in the second plate to transport the non-currency, casino-gaming note in the placer area into the stacker area.

44. (Newly Added—See Generally Old Claim 27) The bill acceptor of claim 43, wherein the second plate, as the number of non-currency casino-gaming notes stacked in the stacker area increases, pushes the stacker notes against a spring-loaded third plate to create additional note storage space.

45. (Newly Added) The bill acceptor of claim 18, wherein the discriminating means sends a counter signal to a processor of a gaming machine.

46. (Newly Added) The method of claim 11, wherein the dual section cash box includes a secure lid having a first slit communicating with said first hopper and a second slit communicating with said second hopper, and the transporting includes transporting currency into the first slit and transporting non-currency notes into the second slit.

47. (Newly Added) The method of claim 11, further comprising unlocking the dual section cash box after it is filled, pulling the unlocked box away from the bill acceptor, transporting the box to a counting room, and unlocking the box at the counting room.